



# United States Department of the Interior

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Grand Canyon National Park

P.O. Box 129

Grand Canyon, Arizona 86023-0129

IN REPLY REFER TO:

D18 (GRCA 8219)

February 22, 2002

Dear Interested Party:

Subject: Backcountry Information Center

Reference: Request for Comments on Initial Proposed Action (General Scoping)

The National Park Service (NPS) is in the initial stages of planning for the renovation of the Maswik Transportation Center, the current site of the Park's Backcountry Information Center. This project is located in Grand Canyon Village on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park (see attached map).

The Maswik Transportation Center was built in the early 1990s, prior to the completion of the park's General Management Plan. Its original use was to serve as a secondary point of arrival for Grand Canyon Railway passengers from Tusayan. A railroad spurline from Grand Canyon Airport into the park, serving as another means of mass transit for Park visitors, did not materialize. It would have been the point of arrival for up to 20% of South Rim visitors had this rail service been instituted. Since the mid-1990s, the facility has served as a Village Route shuttle bus stop combined with the Backcountry Information Center. The facility will continue to be utilized in this capacity, as well as accommodate the river permits office.



Purpose and Need for Action: The current backcountry and river permits facilities at the South Rim are inadequate in several ways: The backcountry and river permits offices are in two separate buildings that were not originally designed to house them. The buildings are too small to meet the needed functions and space for personnel. The required long-term file storage is in a third facility (trailer/container) that is also too small. Consolidating these two offices and associated storage space into one facility would provide for more efficient park operations and improved visitor services.

Proposed Action: The proposal includes modification of the existing Maswik Transportation Center building for use as the Backcountry Information Center. The river permits office, the backcountry permits office and all necessary storage would be consolidated into one facility that would be called the Backcountry Information Center, located in the Maswik Transportation Center building. The building has sufficient area under the existing roof structure to incorporate the entire required facility program. The proposed renovated facility would have a roof-covered public lobby, visitor contact windows, restrooms, offices, break/training room and storage.

The advantages of this proposal include the fact that the project would utilize an existing building, utilities are already in place, the site has existing parking, and the site is close to a shuttle stop. All of the spatial requirements of the facility would be met with the design of a new floor plan within the existing roofline and supporting structure, requiring very little disturbance to the surrounding area. Renovation of the existing building to combine all backcountry service and administrative needs into one facility would benefit visitors by providing a central location for all backcountry and river permitting functions. The proposed Backcountry Information Center would be approximately 4,652 square feet (SF) from outside corner to outside corner, of which approximately 2,160 SF within the existing footprint would be new construction and the remaining would be remodeled space. The new exterior walls, windows and doors would match the existing structure in materials and colors. The roofline and supporting structure would remain unchanged. The facility will also continue to serve as a Village Route shuttle bus stop.

Before we begin the environmental analysis for this project, we would like to hear your viewpoints on the action and any issues or concerns you have regarding the proposal. **Please send your comments to the address below, or email Sara White, Compliance Officer, at [sara\\_white@nps.gov](mailto:sara_white@nps.gov) no later than April 1, 2002.**

Grand Canyon National Park  
Attn: Sara White, Compliance Officer  
P.O. Box 129  
Grand Canyon, AZ 86023

Please be aware that names and addresses of respondents may be released if requested under the Freedom of Information Act. Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which we would withhold from the record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety. Anonymous comments may be included in the public record. However, the National Park Service is not legally required to consider or respond to anonymous comments.

We appreciate your input on this proposal. If you have any questions regarding the project, please call Debbie Lutch, Environmental Protection Specialist, at (928) 774-0095 or Sara White, Compliance Officer, at (928) 638-7956.

Sincerely,

Joseph F. Alston  
Superintendent

Enclosure

If you would like to receive a hard copy of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for this project when it is complete, please contact Sara White at the address above, at (928) 638-7956, or at [sara\\_white@nps.gov](mailto:sara_white@nps.gov), and one will be sent to you during the comment period. If you do not respond to this request, a hard copy of the EA will not be sent to you. However, please be aware that this Environmental Assessment (when complete) and other environmental documents are routinely available for your review on the Grand Canyon National Park website at [www.nps.gov/grca/mgmt/](http://www.nps.gov/grca/mgmt/)

# Grand Canyon Village, South Rim Grand Canyon National Park

